

## James Howerton to Andrew Jackson, April 5, 1841, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>JAMES HOWERTON TO JACKSON.

Coahoma County, Mississippi, April 5, 1841.

Dear Sir, I should not trouble you with these lines if I had not been informed by a reasent Letter recd. from A Jackson jr. that you never saw or understood the transactions or settlement between him yourself and me made by him and myself, in fact that you knew nothing about how your business in this region has been mannaged or settled, untill you saw a late Letter from Parker informing you that I intended to have an attachment ishsued to force the collection of what remained due me for my wages. what was contained in that Letter I am not in possession of, but sure I am if you had been present and heard all that was said to 0124 100 Parker upon that subject and the manner, in which, it was said, you would not have been offended, and Sir, I believe that the matter has been misrepresented to you by some means or other or you would not have said what A J. jr. says in his letter to me you did say. I therefore take the liberty to give you a concise statement of all our transactions.

In the first place, A.J.jr imployed me somewhere about the 27th Dec. 1838, to come to Miss. to take charge of his plantation and hands as he said, he was to pay all the expenses of moving my family (9 in number) and property down and furnish my family with every thing necessary for sustinance and comfort at his expense and pay me &dollar;600.00 wages the first year commencing at the time he imployed me (and if you have any papers to the contrary I am deceived for A.J.jr told me it was only a rect. for your negros) &dollar;800.00 for the second year and &dollar;1000.00 for the third if I

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thought proper to stay as long, but when we came to talk of the second year, he pled hard times the low price of cotton, etc. in consequence of which, I agreed to take \$700.00 with conditions that if I made 100 Bailes of Cotton averageing 400 lbs. he was to pay me the \$800.00, in making of which I failed, but he Parker and myself all agreed, from the book in the Gin house and what was in the field then would be 60 or 70 Bailes, and I shall allways believe if it had been neatly saved and no mistake made in dividing the new and old cotton it would not have fallen much short of our calculation—but admit the crop did fall short, did you expect me to controle divine providence, or ware you uninformed upon the subjects of the seasons and high water last year throughout this reagon as well as else where. let these things now pass, and I will procede to give you a sketch of the settlement.

A.J.jr came down to the plantation about the 8th nov. last, told me he had imployed a Mr. Parker for the next year and he expected him down about christmass, but he came before A.J.jr left and after being there some weak or 10 day A.J.jr. sayed to me that Parker had come down sooner than he expected and was doing nothing and if I was willing he would take charge of the hands that he might git somewhat use to them and be making araingements to soot him for another year. I replied that I was able to attend to business and was willing to fill my contract and should make no deduction on my wages if he did take charge. A.J.jr. then reply that he neather expected or wished such a thing. we then settled and in settleing he named the very things he now pretends to contend for but on explanation and reflection he gave them up and sayed he was then satisfied and executed a note for the ballance due me written in a form for you to put your name as I was doing business for you as well as for him. when I reached Ten. and called to see you he told me that you would not put your name to more than \$400.00 which note I cashed at 12 1/2 cents discounts. I intended to have named the whole subject to you and Brought my Book and all the papers relating to all the transactions on your plantation while I remained there, but at his request I declined to do so, (upon his promise that he would certainly pay me as soon as I reached home and Sir the first word of complaint I

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heard from him was 0125 101 by Letter, since Parker informed you I intended to force the collection of the note I still hold for the bal. of my 2 years wages which he expected as he told parker and as he (P) says.

I did it is true commence sute, but wrote him when he was last down, stating my reasons for so doing—that it was not my wish to mulct you or him with caust and if he would pay this note I now hold I would pay what costs had accru&apos;d and have the suit dismissed which he has refused to do and pupuses to settle it at the end of a Law suit. I suspos he wants an oppertunity to spend a part at least of the million he speaks of in his Letter that he will spen at Law rather than pay what he knows is Just; let it be so then, I have his as well as your Letters besides living testimony to establish my every transaction between us and not only hold him but you bound till the last cent is paid and in legal money, as it seems I must wait till I make it at the end of a Long suit. he says a great deal about being pressed and hard run but his course does not prove his assertions; he as well as you say a great deel a bout the expense of your Miss. plantation as if you susposed I had no knowledg of the expense which accrued while I lived on the place. if so you mistake, I have kept an act. of all the corn meet cash sugar coffee etc. there has been only &dollar;40.00 in cash furnished for the use of the plantation during my stay there except what was made from wood I cut and sold. I would put every article down if I had rum in this Letter, and I will say without fear of contridiction by any man of Judgment who has settled such a plantation in this country that it has not been done to the same extent under such circumstances, with doubtle the expense I run you to as you seem to wish to give it that barring by a continual repetition of the same thing (Expense).

A.J.jr sayed a gooddeal a bout the many favours shewn me and family. I am at a loss to know the first in the shape of a favour except he gave my wife a small calf and afterwards took it back, but I suppose he would say it was a favour for me to hazard the health of all my family and undergo all the privations of life and even run the risk of our lives for a mear song to settle you a plantation in this country—it was a great favour for me to furnish him and all the workmen with Beds and Beding till they wear nearly worn out without his

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offering the first cents for the use of them and when he did bring down a Bed to direct Old Sally to put it a way and not let it be used by any person, it was one of his favours to palm such a set of workmen on me without my having the least controld over them, it was a great favour for me to furnish his workmen and negroes with nessarys such as was sutable for his sons, it was a favour for my wife to cut out and make his and your nego&apos;s clothes without his offering her the first cents, it was also a favour for me and my wife to attend to and administer medison day and night to his and your negros to save the expense of a Doctor, it was a great favour for me to allow him in our settlement 50 or 60 dollars to pay the damage my neighbours done him in visiting my family, it was a favour to listen to any lye the negros would tell him and circulate [?] 0126 102 them if he could to my injury, it was a great favour after he put me to the trouble he did, to divide the note he gave me for my wages so as to get your name to 400. dollars, to have that mch cash at 12 1/2 cents discount, it was a favour to give him the Int. on my first years wages up to our settlement, and do surpose he would consider it a very great favour if he could swindle me out of the balance due, etc. etc. now in concluding I will say that my best Judgment was exerted in garding your Interest. I have done bisiness of various sorts for all sorts of men and this is the first time I have failed to give general satisfaction and it seems I didnot in this untill I come to collect my Just earnings, but Sir God is above the deavil. I am sure he will not suffer the rich to grind the faces of the poor in this case and if he (A.J.jr) surposed to scare me into his unjust proposition by his bosting of the millions he had to spend at Law, he barked up the wrong tree—if I am in want of what is my Just right&apos;s I am yrs. with due respect